

Message Text

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43

ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02 PA-02

USIA-15 INR-07 SS-15 ARA-10 NSC-05 /097 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MVANORDER:DP

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H- MR. FLATEN (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

NEA/ARN - MR. BULLEN

NEA/ARP - MR. AHERNE

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

----- 017370

R 260338Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
CINCEUR

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GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
FEBRUARY 25, 1976:

ANNOUNCEMENT: I WISH TO INFORM YOU THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY
ATHERTON IS LEAVING TODAY TO JOIN UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON
IN ALGIERS. AS YOU RECALL, WE ANNOUNCED THE UNDER SECRE-
TARY HAS BEEN TRAVELING OUT IN THAT AREA.

THIS SEEMED A GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR ONE OF OUR PERIODIC
REVIEWS WITH THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT OF A WHOLE RANGE OF
MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST, INCLUDING BILATERAL RELATIONS,
U.S. ON-GOING EFFORTS FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS SUCH AS THE SAHARA SITUATION.

THE SECRETARY ALSO THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR MR.
ATHERTON TO STOP IN TUNISIA AND MOROCCO FOR SIMILAR EX-
CHANGES, GIVEN OUR LONG-STANDING AND CLOSE RELATIONS WITH
THESE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

AS YOU KNOW, WE HAVE IMPORTANT RELATIONS WITH THESE
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GOVERNMENTS, AND IT HAS BEEN OUR HABIT TO REVIEW PERIOD-
ICALLY MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST WITH THEM. WE ARE
PLEASED THAT THESE GOVERNMENTS SAID THEY WOULD WELCOME
MR. ATHERTON'S VISIT.

NOW, THE DATES: HE WILL BE IN TUNIS ON THE 26TH.
AND, AS I SAID AT THE BEGINNING, IN ALGIERS ON THE 28TH,
IN RABAT ON THE 1ST, AND THEN BACK TO WASHINGTON.

Q. DOES HE LEAVE TODAY?

A. YES, TONIGHT.

Q. WHAT IS ROBINSON DOING IN ALGIERS?

A. HE HAD BEEN IN ZAIRE AND IN CAIRO AND ALGIERS. HE WAS DISCUSSING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN ALL THOSE VARIOUS AREAS. I ANNOUNCED IT BEFORE I LEFT ON THE TRIP.

Q. ON WHAT YOU JUST MENTIONED -- ALLUDED TO -- ON THE SAHARA SITUATION, PRESIDENT FORD IN AN INTERVIEW WITH US YESTERDAY SAID THAT WE WERE WORKING TOGETHER WITH A NUMBER OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO PREVENT THE SPANISH SAHARA SITUATION FROM BLOWING UP INTO ANOTHER ANGOLA. CAN YOU TELL US -- CAN YOU BE A LITTLE BIT MORE DETAILED ON WHAT WE ARE DOING?

A. NO, I CAN'T. THERE WAS A UN RESOLUTION, I BELIEVE, ADOPTED ON DECEMBER 10, WHICH WE SUPPORTED, WHICH SORT OF SET OUT THE GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. AND I THINK THAT THAT RESOLUTION, IF I RECALL CORRECTLY, SAID SOMETHING ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS BY THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED--SOME SORT OF A REGIONAL SOLUTION--WITHOUT OUTSIDE INTERVENTION OR INTERFERENCE WITHIN A U.N. FRAMEWORK. AND I THINK THAT IS OUR GENERAL POLICY, BUT I CAN'T ANSWER YOUR QUESTION ABOUT WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID.

Q. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE WHITE HOUSE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN OTHER PLACES IN AFRICA, INCLUDING NAMIBIA AND THE SPANISH SAHARA. CAN UNCLASSIFIED

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YOU PROVIDE ANY FURTHER DETAILS FOR US?

A. I THINK THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER STATEMENTS EARLIER ABOUT OUR CONCERN OF THE PRESENCE OF A LARGE NUMBER OF CUBAN TROOPS IN AFRICA. I DON'T HAVE ANY NUMBERS.

Q. YOU DON'T HAVE ANY NUMBERS?

A. I BELIEVE THERE ARE STILL 12,000 CUBAN TROOPS IN ANGOLA.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE045843
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MVANORDER:DP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760074-0036
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976029/aaaaahkv.tel
Line Count: 166
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: castelsl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 JUL 2004 by schwenja>; APPROVED <02 SEP 2004 by castelsl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, US
To: ALGIERS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006